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REMARKS

Claims 1-20 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being obvious over US Patent Number 5148897 (*Vanroye*) in view of US Patent Number 6640541 (*Winkelmann*) and in further view of US Patent Number 5198285 (*Arai*).

Claim 1 is a shock absorber with numerous limitations including an intermediate silicon carbon layer disposed between the outer peripheral surface of the slide member and the amorphous hard carbon layer. *Vanroye* and *Winkelmann*, alone or in combination with *Arai* do not teach a shock absorber with all the limitations of claim 1. *Vanroye* and *Winkelmann*, alone or in combination with *Arai*, do not teach the shock absorber of claim 1 including a polytetrafluorethylene coating on a guide bush and an amorphous hard carbon layer on an outer peripheral surface of the slide member. *Winkelmann* discloses replacing the polytetrafluorethylene layer with an amorphous carbon layer, but does not teach or suggest a shock absorber with both a polytetrafluorethylene layer and an amorphous hard carbon layer.

Vanroye and *Winkelmann*, alone or in combination with *Arai*, do not teach or suggest a shock absorber with all the limitations of claim 1 including an intermediate silicon carbon layer between the amorphous hard carbon layer and the outer peripheral surface of the slide member. Applicant respectfully asserts that the Examiner has misread *Arai*. *Arai* does not teach or suggest an intermediate silicon-carbon layer. The intermediate layer in *Arai* is a metal-carbon layer. See, e.g. *Arai* at Col. 7, lines 43 - 50 ("[A] base of iron or iron alloy material, a metal-carbon compound layer formed on the surface of the base, and an amorphous thin film based on carbon formed on the surface of the metal-carbon compound layer"), Col. 8 at lines 3 - 7 ("... interlayer of a carbon compound of iron or another metal is incorporated between the base and the surface thin layer of carbon-hydrogen-silicon."), Col. 8, lines 26 - 30 (The metal-carbon compound layer incorporated as an interlayer on the surface of the iron-based metallic material according to the present invention comprises a carbon compound of iron or other metals.), Col. 9, lines 38 - 50 ("[The metal-carbon] coating serves as an interlayer avoiding direct contact of the object with the carbon-hydrogen-silicon thin film surface layer..."). Thus, *Arai*, alone or in combination with *Vanroye* and/or *Winkelmann* does not teach or suggest a shock absorber with all the limitations of claim 1 including an intermediate layer silicon-carbon layer. Thus, the prior art of record does not teach or suggest the shock absorber of claim 1 and it is patentable.

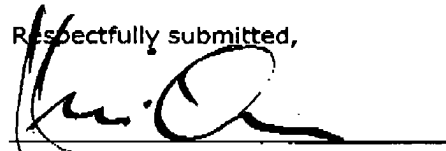
Claims 2-20 depend, directly or indirectly from claim 1 and thus are patentable.

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CONCLUSION

Applicant asserts that all of the objections have been obviated and, therefore now respectfully requests withdrawal of the objections, and allowance of the application.

Respectfully submitted,



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CERTIFICATE OF TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being facsimile transmitted to the United States Patent and Trademark Office, Fax No. 703-872-9306, Attn: Examiner Benjamin Pezzlo at: 703-872-9306 on August 25, 2004.


Chriss Stehn

F153(Orum & Roth)